

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 MCT-01 SY-05 IO-13 DHA-02
ACDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
/096 W

-----006751 111516Z /46

P R 111321Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6079
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1962

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT RH
SUBJ: SITHOLE RETURN TO RHODESIA: PATRIOTIC FRONT CLAIMS
ASSASSINATION PLOT

SUMMARY: THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HAS SPOKEN OUT AGAINST
SITHOLE'S JULY 10 RETURN TO RHODESIA AND CHARGED THAT THE
REVERENED HAS CONSPIRED WITH SMITH AND SOUTH AFRICA TO ASSASS-
INATE PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADERSHIP. CONSPIRACY CHARGE ALSO SERVES
OTHER ZAPU/ANU OBJECTIVES. END SUMMARY.

1. SITHOLE RETURN TO RHODESIA: ACCORDING TO ZAMBIAN PRESS
REPORTS, REV. NDABANINGI SITHOLE RETURNED TO RHODESIA JULY 10,
BRINGING AN END TO HIS TWO-YEAR EXILE. SITHOLE ALLEGEDLY
RENOUNCED ACTS OF TERRORISM PRIOR TO ARRIVAL WHICH LED TO
RHODESIAN POLICE REVOCATION OF HIS OUTSTANDING DETENTION ORDER.
ZAMBIA PRESS REPORTED THAT APPROXIMATELY 50 SUPPORTERS MET
SITHOLE AT AIRPORT WITH CLENCHED FIST SALUTES. AFTER ARRIVAL
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FROM MALAWI, SITHOLE ADDRESSED UNSPECIFIED NUMBER OF PEOPLE AT
SALISBURY RALLY AND CHARGED THAT "ANYONE WHO THINKS THAT MORE
THAN SIX MILLION PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE CAN BE RUN FROM OUTSIDE IS
DEADLY MISTAKEN. THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO HAVE ANY RIGHT TO CHOOSE
LEADERS FROM THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE ARE THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE
THEMSELVES. THE FRONTLINE STATES HAVE NO RIGHT TO CHOOSE LEADERS
FOR US." ACCORDING TO PRESS, SITHOLE GAVE HIS FULL ENDORSEMENT

TO THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PEACE INITIATIVE AND ADDED THAT "I AM WILLING TO TALK WITH ANYBODY WHO CAN HELP TOWARDS A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT."

2. OFFICIAL PATRIOTIC FRONT (PF) REACTION TO SITHOLE MOVE WAS DESCRIBED AS THE "RETURN OF A TRAITOR" AND THE END OF A LONG SERIES OF TREASONOUS UNDERGROUND CONTACTS MADE FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPOSING THE "BRITISH SELLOUT SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS" FOR RHODESIA. FRONT SPOKESMAN WARNED THAT "ANY DEAL CLINCHED BY PUPPETS OR NEO-COLONIALISTS SHALL BE RESISTED NO LESS THAN THE MASSES OF ZIMBABWE ARE RESISTING THE RHODESIAN FACIST REGIME."

3. SITHOLE RETURN WAS SUBJECT OF JULY 11 "TIMES OF ZAMBIA" EDITORIAL. SPECULATING ON PURPOSE OF MOVE, EDITORIAL SAID "THE TROUBLE IS THAT HE HAS PROBABLY MORTGAGED TOO MUCH OF HIS FUTURE TO SMITH, VORSTER, THE BRITISH AND THE AMERICANS, TO BACK OUT NOW. HE OBVIOUSLY HAS TO LIVE UP TO THE PROMISES WHICH ALONE MUST HAVE RESULTED IN HIS RETURN TO SALISBURY..." EDITORIAL CALLED ON ZIMBABWEANS TO REJECT ANY DEAL SITHOLE MIGHT MAKE WITH SMITH AND POSSIBLY MUZOREWA. TIMES FURTHER WARNED OF SITHOLE CHARGE THAT PF IS DOMINATED BY KARANGAS AND NDEBELE-KALANGAS. EDITORIAL ALSO CRITICIZED ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE'S ALLEGED POSITION ON FUTURE ROLE OF SMITH FORCES AND SAID ARMY SHOULD BE DISBANDED AFTER WHICH CHIEFS AND MERCENARIES SHOULD BE PLACED ON TRIAL FOR MURDER. EDITORIAL CONCLUDED "BY EVEN SUGGESTING THAT THERE COULD BE A ROLE FOR THE PSYCHOPATHS WHO BELONG TO THIS SO-CONFIDENTIAL

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CALLED ARMY, THE BRITISH AND THE AMERICANS ARE DEMONSTRATING ONCE AGAIN WHY IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ANYONE TO TAKE THEM SERIOUSLY IN THEIR ALLEGED 'INITIATIVE."

4. PATRIOTIC FRONT REVEALS ASSASSINATION PLOT. IN JULY 10 STATEMENT TO PRESS ON BEHALF OF PF, AFRICAN PEOPLE'S UNION (ZAPU) SPOKESMAN SAUL NDLOVU CHARGED THAT SITHOLE HAS CONSPIRED WITH SOUTH AFRICAN BUREAU FOR STATE SECURITY (BOSS) AND THE SMITH REGIME TO TRAIN 20 BLACK RHODESIANS TO ASSASSINATE THE TOP LEADERSHIP OF THE PF, ESPECIALLY JOSHUA NKOMO. ASSASSINATION CORP ALLEGEDLY INCLUDES ONE WHITE CURRENTLY IN SEMI-PERMANENT RESIDENCE AT SAVOY HOTEL IN LONDON. NDLOVU CLAIMED CONSPIRACY INCLUDED MEETING FOLLOWING COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE BETWEEN SITHOLE AND RHODESIAN CABINET SECY JACK GAYLARD AT LONDON'S HEATHROW HOTEL. NDLOVU DECLARED THAT TRAINING AND EQUIPPING OF ASSASSINS IS TO BE DONE BY MERCENARIES IN BRITAIN AND BOSS. NDLOVU SAID THE PF CAN SPECIFY DATE AND PLACES OF SITHOLE MEETINGS AND ADDED THE PF IS AWARE OF OTHER ARRANGEMENTS SITHOLE HAS MADE TO KILL PF LEADERSHIP.

5. COMMENT: PF APPARENTLY CHOSE SITHOLE RETURN AS OPPORTUNE MOMENT TO CHARGE ASSASSINATION PLOT IN ATTEMPT TO BLUNT ANY

PRO-SITHOLE POLITICAL MOMENTUM IN OR OUTSIDE REBEL COLONY. IN ADDITION TO THE REGULAR AMOUNT OF NOISE GENERATED AMONG NATIONAL LEADERS IN ATTEMPT TO DISCREDIT EACH OTHER, WE CAN SUGGEST TWO ADDITIONAL REASONS BEHIND THE PF DECISION TO ALLEGE AN ASSASSINATION CONSPIRACY DURING SITHOLE'S RETURN:

(A) REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE 21-MAN ASSASSINATION CORPS CHARGE IS TRUE, IT IS IN THE PF'S INTEREST TO EITHER CREATE OR EXPOSE A DIRECT LINK BETWEEN THOSE IT SEES AS ITS BLACK AND WHITE POLITICAL ENEMIES. TALK OF AN ASSASSINATION CONSPIRACY BETWEEN SITHOLE, SMITH, AND THE SOUTH AFRICANS, ALL AGAINST THE PF IS A CONVENIENT PACKAGE. ON HEELS OF SMITH'S RECENT CHARGE THAT THE PF IS "PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE" AND SITHOLE'S SUBSEQUENT RETURN WITHOUT ADVERSE LEGAL CONSEQUENCES, THIS LINK IS ALL THE MORE CREDIBLE. THE PF PROBABLY FEARS SOME LOSS OF INTERNAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

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INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT IN THE EVENT IT MUST CONTINUE THE GUERRILLA WAR AGAINST AN OSTENSIBLY BLACK LED RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT. REMOVAL OF THE VISIBLE WHITE LEADERSHIP AT THE TOP BY SUBSTITUTION OF WELL KNOWN BLACK FIGURES WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY TAKE THE WIND OUT OF SOME ANTI-WHITE SAILS. PORTRAYAL OF THE CONSTANT WHITE THREAT BY LINKING SOUTH AFRICA AND SMITH WITH SITHOLE WOULD BE NEEDED TO MAINTAIN MILITARY MOMENTUM IF THE WAR CHANGES FROM A BLACK-WHITE TO A BLACK-BLACK CONFLICT.

(B) RECENT CONTACTS BETWEEN EMBASSY AND MEMBERS OF ZANU AND ZAPU HAVE LED US TO BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE INCREASINGLY SERIOUS DIVISIONS AMONG THE TWO MEMBERS OF THE FRONT. ZANU SUPPORTERS CLAIM THEY ARE THE MAINSTAY OF THE FRONT AND THAT WITHOUT THEM, NKOMO WOULD SIGNIFY NOTHING. ZAPU NKOMO ENTHUSIASTS TELL US THE REVERSE IS TRUE. ZAPU CONTACTS ALSO CLAIM THAT ZANU IS BADLY FRACTURED DUE TO SPREADING DISILLUSIONMENT WITH RHOBERT MUGABE AND ALLEGE THAT ZANU MILITARY COMMANDERS ARE MANEUVERING FOR POWER. IF THIS SITUATION IS TRUE, THE ALLEGATION OF A SITHOLE PLOT TO KILL THE PF LEADERSHIP COULD BE USED AS A CONVENIENT COVER IN THE EVENT THAT MORE SERIOUS INTRA-ZANU FIGHTING ERUPTED RESULTING IN THE DEATH OF A MAJOR ZANU LEADER.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Subject: SITHOLE RETURN TO RHODESIA: PATRIOTIC FRONT CLAIMS ASSASSINATION PLOT SUMMARY: THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HAS SPOKEN OUT AGAINST
TAGS: PINT, RH, (SITHOLE, NDABANINGI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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